Inhale

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Inhale

by TigerPrawn

Summary

Will could feel the way his lungs tightened with every inhale, how he expelled blood with every exhale, droplets of crimson speckling his lips, spraying a tint of red fog into the air.

When Will Graham is discovered to be an omega hiding as a beta, he is turned over to the appropriate authorities and entered into The Mating Run, a televised spectacular where wild omegas are tamed and forcibly mated. Hannibal is intrigued.

Chapter 1

“Look at the crowd,” the commentator’s voice rang out around the large arena, piped in through a tannoy and echoing off of the electro-magnetic field that enclosed the dome. “They are going wild for this omega! Can you believe it!”

Will could feel the way his lungs tightened with every inhale, how he expelled blood with every exhale, droplets of crimson speckling his lips, spraying a tint of red fog into the air.

It felt as though time slowed down with each shaky breath before action.

He reared back and let out a roar as he pushed the alpha off, smashing his head back so that it connected with the alpha’s nose. An arc of blood splattered across the sand with little pitter patter sounds that had become all too familiar.

Will roared again the alpha released him and slumped to the ground behind him.

He couldn't see the crowds around the dome, couldn't see the commentators or the cameras live televising the mating run, but he knew they were there watching over the various sections of his current home. No doubt all completely focused on where he stood in the sanded area near the entry to the dome itself.

Will staggered forward, his hand going to his ribs. Bruised, but not broken, he knew from experience. This alpha had been the toughest in a while and that was saying something. One more blow to incapacitate him. Will would only kill him if he had no other choice.

Pressing the alpha into the sand, Will straddled him. The alpha's eyes went wide right before Will landed the first blow and the resulting crack seemed to echo around them. Will hit again, and again almost in a frenzy.

"Have you ever seen another omega like this?" One commentator asked.

"Never, Jimmy. The way he incapacitates the alphas is phenomenal. One might even say, intimate."

"I agree, Brian. Most omega's tactics are much more standoffish, favouring the use of projectiles where they can. This omega has no fear of getting up close and personal with the alphas."

"It's a sight to see, Jimmy. That's for sure."

Will landed one more blow and the alpha went limp. He was still breathing, though it was a wet sound, blood bubbling from his mouth as he did so. But he was still alive.

When Will stood, relieving the pressure on the alpha's chest, he began to cough. Will pushed him with his foot so that he rolled onto his side, choking up blood onto the sand so that he didn't suffocate on it.

He watched the alpha breath for a moment before letting out a long breath of his own, more red droplets spraying into the humid air. And then another deep inhale.

Will stalked off towards the wooded zone, away from the open area of the arena. He'd lay low again and wait until the next alpha was sent in to flush him out, to hunt him.

*

Hannibal watched the screen, his lips pursed as he considered the omega walking away from the camera.

He'd never been one for the televised mating run, it seemed crass and uncouth. But it had become unavoidable the last couple of weeks. The current omega had made headlines by outlasting several alphas now, and not just outlasting them, disabling some of them permanently and killing one.

It had happened before, Hannibal knew, that omegas were able to fend off two, maybe three alphas before being bested and taken. But this one was on his ninth and one of them died of their injuries after. Never before had there been such a ferocious omega in the mating run. Some caused injury until the alphas gave up, but none consistently left them on the brink of death.

Hannibal turned away from the screen and picked up his tablet. Certainly this was an intriguing creature, and he had no doubt that the list of alpha contenders was ever growing. Who wouldn't want to be the alpha to tame and claim such a beast of an omega. What an achievement that would be.

With a slight sneer on his lips, distasteful as it was, Hannibal navigated his way to the show's website to find out more information about the current omega.

Will Graham.
This unmated omega was found posing as a beta and working for the FBI. A cunning creature, he had hidden in plain sight for years - passing many competency tests and never once suspected of being omegan.

He was uncovered by a colleague when his suppressants failed, and was handed over to the appropriate authorities. He quickly became feral and it was clear that he was not a candidate for an arranged mating and so became the property of The Mating Run.

To date, this omega has fended off eight alphas through violent means, one of which has since died of his injuries. Will Graham remains unmated.

Are YOU the alpha to tame him?

Hannibal mused over the information, knowing that shortly it would be updated from eight to nine.

He wasn't going to wait for the update, instead he navigated away and began searching for what he could on Will Graham.

*

Each night grew more uncomfortable for Will. Each hunt day it took longer to fell the alpha, because he was recovering from the injuries from two days previous. That only led to more injuries and he was sure he was already working with a cracked rib.

Every inhale hurt, but the pain simply reminded him to keep going.

He would defeat every alpha that tried to take him for as long as he could, or he'd die trying. He hadn't made it this far through his life as a free man to be subjugated now.

Will sat up on the basic bunk in the hut. He was sure he was the first omega in a long while, perhaps ever, to use the shelter so long. It had been equipped with basic medical supplies, and the food and water was dropped in at the end of each day. Just enough to keep him alive for another day. The longer this went on, the harder it would become.

Will tentatively pulled up his ripped and dirty shirt to look at his side. The bruise there was huge now, black tinged with purple then blue. Too tender to touch, he didn't need to do so to know that at least one rib was cracked.

He winced as he pulled his shirt back down and climbed off the bed. He'd had his day to rest, another alpha would appear an hour after sun up.

His ankles hurt as he paced the hut, trying to encourage his body to ready itself for more punishment.

Finally he left the hut, stretching his arms above his head with a great deal of pain. That last alpha had quickly realised he was favouring his ribs and had played on that before Will had near drowned him in the water area. Alpha number ten.

"Come on number eleven…" Will muttered under his breath as he started to crunch through the woods back towards the sand. Each muscle ached but he pushed through, and would continue to do so.

But he could no longer afford to take this slow. He couldn't wait for them to show their weaknesses and exploit it. He needed to act first and quick. He needed to do as much damage as possible as soon as the alpha arrived so they had no chance against him.

Will waited at the edge of the woods, waiting for the arena door to open and let in the next alpha.

And then, a shadow against blinding light, there she was. Blonde and petite, Will knew not to judge an alpha by their build.

"Number eleven," he said again and then ran.

He sprinted flat out across the sand, toe first instead of heel, giving him practised purchase on the dry sand as he raced. The light still shone, the door slowly closing, her shadow was still cast as he made contact, knocking her off her feet.

Catching her by surprise, she'd gone down easily, but she was strong and was trying hard to take the upper hand. Will held her down as best he could with his right arm across her throat as his left plunged into the sand, sweeping around until he finally found one of the rocks he had placed around the whole area during the night.

With as much force as he could manage in his non-dominant arm, Will smashed the rock against her head at the same moment she finally threw him off. They both landed apart in the sand. The patter of blood was back again, not his this time.

They launched themselves at each other, grappling for dominance.

Will's entire mind focused on the next alpha. He just had to survive this one, and then the next. And the next.

*

Hannibal adjusted the collar of the simple outfit he'd been given to wear - standard as with all the alphas and omegas, so that there could be no advantages amongst any of them.

Matt Brown, the show producer stood to his side, scrolling through the images on a pad, as a dresser tightened the back of Hannibal's outfit and then stood back.

"You got to the front of the line very quickly," Brown commented, the sneer evident in his tone. "I guess greasing the right palms--"

"Tell me what to expect." Hannibal interrupted, despite having already been prepared by another member of the production team.

"About the omega? He's fierce. He's getting tired, he's injured. But don't be complacent, he's smart and he'll take you down if you give him the chance. We've already spent the morning sweeping the sand for hidden weapons. That's how he got the last one."

"I saw," Hannibal murmured, a tight feeling in his chest at the way the omega was being discussed.

"Think you're the one to tame him then?" The words were almost a jeer.

"I think there is much more to Will Graham than people are allowing."

"Pfft," Brown huffed, expression full of derision. "You're not one of those bleeding heart omegan rights activists are you?"

"Not especially," Hannibal answered truthfully, having not given much thought either way to Omegan rights before he saw Will Graham. And perhaps it was wrong of him to think 'but this omega is different', but he did all the same.

A stony silence fell and once the dresser stepped away, Hannibal was guided forward to the large white doors that would admit him to the arena, the sanded part of the dome.

Not one easily subject to stressors, Hannibal was surprised that his heart rate was elevated. Not fear, not even concern, but anticipation. By the end of this day he would have himself the most extraordinary mate.

The artificial sunlight bathed his feet as the door began to rise. He made sure to steel himself against attack as finally he walked out into the sand.

"Lucky number eleven, Brian?"

Hannibal heard the commentators and the cheering from beyond the huge dome, tuning it out immediately as he scanned the horizon for the omega who was yet to present himself.

A new tactic, Hannibal mused, a smile playing over his lips.

This wasn't some feral beast, this was an intelligent creature, well aware that this was televised and each subsequent combatant would know his previous attacks.

In fact, Hannibal had counted on it.

With one last look to make sure he did not leave himself open to attack, Hannibal took off at a run towards the wooded quarter of the dome.

He could hear the cheers of the crowd, the colour commentary as he reached the tree line and lost himself in the dense foliage.

Hours of watching back each attack had taught Hannibal one thing - that every alpha had made the mistake of entering the dome thinking they were the hunter, when in fact they were the prey.

Chapter 2

Chapter Summary

Hannibal has entered the arena, has Will met his match?

Will watched as the alpha ran into the woods, an unexpected but undoubtedly clever move.

He had to reassess. This one was clever.

But Will knew he was smarter than any alpha he'd ever met, he just needed to work out the weakness of this one and exploit it. The downside was that it was going to take longer, at which he blew out a breath, feeling instantly exhausted. He'd hoped they would just come thick and fast, but now this first move from the alpha made clear this one was in for the long game.

Will stepped backwards, retreating into the treeline. He moved quickly back to the small stash of weapons he'd fashioned-- sticks made sharp with blades of stone. As projectiles they wouldn't get far and would do minimal damage, especially as he was in no condition to throw with any great power behind it. But in his weakened state they might make all the difference in hand to hand combat.

Will picked up the best of them and began to stalk through the trees.

He couldn't allow this alpha to drag this out and tire him more. Every step now was a jolt of pain through him, though his ribs had now grown numb, his body was shutting that pain from his mind.

With great effort, Will moved as silently as he could through the trees, towards where the alpha had fled. When he reached a suitable tree, he climbed, biting his tongue so as not to cry out with the pain. From this vantage point he'd see any movement across most of the treeline and a little beyond. He only hoped the alpha wasn't fast enough to get to the denser trees at the edge of the dome.

From where he looked, he could see where the trees met the beach at this end of the dome and wondered if they had cleared that end of the beach too. He had planted less rocks there, thinking it unlikely he'd need to use them. He touched his waistband to feel the makeshift weapons he had put there.

Long minutes passed as Will tuned out the colour commentary echoing around the dome, focused entirely on the trees.

And finally, there!

And then a second time, a branch bowed and then the crack of snapping wood rang out. He was arming himself. But, he has also now given his position away.

Will moved quickly down to the lower branches and then dropped into the bushes below. He winced at the pain, ignoring it best he could as he moved on the alpha's position. He needed to take every opportunity to finish this quickly, especially if the man was now armed.

*

Hannibal used the jagged edge of a rock to pare down the end of the stick into a point as efficiently as he was able.

Many would assume he wasn't the outdoors type, and perhaps not to a greater degree. But what he was, was an opportunist and survivor. His primal instincts were strong and fashioning a rudimentary weapon came easily to him despite having never done it before. he was an adept hunter. All to his benefit since he was now the prey.

Once he'd snapped the branch, he had quickly moved back towards the treeline, to some thicker bushes he had found on his way through. From this vantage point it was easy to scent the omega coming closer - heading towards the area Hannibal had just vacated.

He no doubt was expecting Hannibal to attack at his first opportunity, but Hannibal knew that there was no way to win against this omega in that way. Not if he wanted to fully claim him.

And that truly was the goal.

It had been from the moment the realisation had hit. He didn't recognise the omega of course, but the more he'd read, the more background he'd uncovered the connections became clear. As did the fact that this really was the only omega for him.

Long minutes passed and the scent was sharp in the air, all the sharper for the tang of blood and whiff of pain. The omega was so close, but still managed to completely hide himself in the thicket, moving around the area where Hannibal had been. It must have been at least ten minutes before finally the omega came out into the open, moving to the remains of the branch Hannibal had snapped, inspecting it. Assessing the sort of weapon he might now face.

Of course, that was assuming it was a weapon and not merely a tool for self defence.

Hannibal took a breath and clenched his jaw, his hand tight around the shaft of his would-be spear. He stood and took a step forward, not attempting to hide his presence.

He had studied the tapes, previous episodes with Will and hours upon hours of previous omegas. He had studied every aspect of the dome, from those tapes and from the blueprints he'd been able to obtain from public records.

He had drawn the conclusion that there were, within the dome, two areas that were harder for the cameras to capture, and along with those, one other area where sound was lower quality.

This was one of those, the thick overgrowth at the opposite end to the door, an area that seemed a decorative afterthought when the action - one way or another - was expected to take

place on the open beach. The other was another area of thick overgrowth where the omega's hut was housed. And whilst it was out in the full open, the small patch of faux tidal water that lapped at the beach also made sound difficult.

Within seconds of emerging, the omega was on his guard. Turning to Hannibal in an aggressive stance as he clearly eyed the distance between them and weighed his options.

This certainly wasn't like an omega the media would have the public believe existed. Not a beast turned feral through lack of mating, but equally no submission in the presence of an alpha, no compulsive kowtowing.

No, indeed, this omega meant to kill him if he could.

As they stood frozen this distance from each other, Hannibal raised both his hands - one palm out to Will and the other a half palm with some fingers still curled around the branch.

"This is just for defence," Hannibal's words were barely above a whisper. A murmur that travelled in a rumble across the air and made the omega's ears visibly twitch.

He narrowed his eyes and studied Hannibal, no doubt wondering what it was he was trying to do. What plan he had in order to subdue the omega.

Now that he had his attention, Hannibal had to act.

*

Will watched, curious as the alpha took another step from the thicket.

Their eyes locked and silence filled the air between them, almost tangible. Finally the alpha spoke in barely over a whisper, words carried on the artificial breeze.

"I know who you are, Special Agent Graham."

Will narrowed his eyes. This one wants to play some sort of game.

"I expect I'm the most famous omega in the country right now. Everyone knows who I am." Will replied in a hushed tone, though not as quiet as the alpha who then raised a finger to his lips.

Will's frown deepened.

"If we're quiet they won't pick up what we're saying here. Nor at your hut."

Will said nothing, continuing to watch the alpha for any sudden moves. Why did he care if they could be heard? Will had spent years dealing with people playing games, but this one he was finding difficult to decipher.

"Why don't you want them to know what we're saying?" Will asked the obvious question.

The alpha smirked, pleased with himself that the conversation was happening. There was something to that smugness. It felt like the alpha wasn't so much pleased that Will hadn't attacked him, but at being right in his self assured belief that Will wouldn't attack.

"If they can't hear us then we could socialise like adults. God forbid we become friendly."

Will huffed, but copied the alpha's low tone when he responded, "I don't find you that interesting."

"You will." The alpha smirk was back.

"I-" Will's words were cut off by the sound of an alarm. "Fuck!" He cursed, looking around them for the threat.

The alpha tensed, his jaw tightening and then Will saw it over his shoulder.

"Run," Will called out before taking off towards the beach. The alpha was on his heels and he was unsure why he'd warned the man. He could have had the advantage.

He pushed the thought from his mind as he hit the beach and ran through the shallows, before turning and facing the inevitable.

*

Hannibal kept pace with the omega as the drone hovered behind him, getting closer and closer until he felt the crackle of electricity against his back. It was only when the omega turned to confront him that it flew off to wherever it had come from.

He had seen this scenario in some of the past episodes he watched, it was what had first made him wonder about the sound issues. If the audience lost sight or sound of one or both the contestants for too long then the drones came to drive them out with their annoying little tasers.

The proof was in the roar of the crowd as they both hit the edge of the water.

"And here he comes! The longest lasting alpha so far with our current omega. But the tables might be about to turn, what do you think Brian?"

"I think it sounds like you want the omega to win, Jimmy."

There was laughter in the commentator booth and then more from around the crowd, but Hannibal began to tune it out, concentrating instead on keeping Will in the water.

"Can't run," Will told him, "the drone will come back until we fight."

"Until we mate," Hannibal corrected.

Will growled and Hannibal could see the effort it was taking him not to lunge forward. Not that he blamed him.

In each episode he had watched, and rewatched, it was clear that Will didn't allow the alphas the upper hand, he wasn't about to now by making uncalculated moves.

Perhaps he could lead Will deeper into the water and their conversation could continue? But when he took a step backwards, so did Will - not forwards as he had hoped.

"I know you, Will." Hannibal taunted, "you're curious. You want to know how I know you."

"You don't know me," Will spat back.

"Oh, but I do. And perhaps, you know me too." It wasn't a question and that seemed to do it.

Will paced forward, but he didn't stop, he kept coming until he was close enough to take hold of Hannibal by his rudimentary shirt and toss him back towards the shore. As Hannibal landed on his back in the water, Will waded quickly back towards him. Then he was on him, pinning him.

"You know so much about me, you know I'm resourceful," Will growled as he pulled a short, sharpened stick from his waistband and tried to thrust it into Hannibal's side.

Quick reflexes averted the attack, but only for a moment. They grappled and rolled, the water in their faces a disadvantage to them both.

"You're not going to kill me, Will." Hannibal said with absolute certainty.

"No?" Will bared his teeth.

Hannibal grunted as he pushed up, knocking Will's balance and rolling them again until this time he had the omega beneath him.

Despite having tuned out the noise from the crowd, the collective gasp and subsequent cheers were impossible to ignore.

"They want you to lose, Will."

Will shook his head, "They want a good show."

Will wriggled and Hannibal pushed him down into the sand a moment before there was an explosion of pain in his side.

Another shocked gasp from the crowd and shouting, cheering, everything in between.

"See? Just need to give them something entertaining." Will pushed Hannibal off of him and scrambled to his feet in the unforgiving sand.

Hannibal grunted, taking hold of the stick and pulling it out, letting the sting of sea water lap over the thankfully shallow wound.

"You're not feral, Will. You're not some crazed omega as the press is trying to paint you. The product of being allowed to go too many years unmated." Hannibal ground at the words as he

staggered to his feet, the sand red beneath him.

“I will not be mated. I will die before I let that happen. Or you will. Whatever you are playing at *alpha*” the word was spat with disdain, “it won’t work. One of us will be dead at the end of this.”

“I hope not,” Hannibal drawled through the pain. “I’m quite enjoying your company.”

With a snarl, Will lunged forward again meaning to press his advantage, but Hannibal moved at the last moment. He felt the disturbance of air as Will just missed him, stumbling back towards the water.

Now would be the time to attack. The omega was off balance, already wounded and exhausted from the many days he had already been at this. Compared to that, Hannibal’s injury was but a mere inconvenience.

If he rushed Will now and took him down, subdued him by holding him under the water, it would be a very simple thing to mate him.

As he stumbled, Will looked back over his shoulder and his eyes said he knew all of that too. As he tried to right himself and move defensively, he knew that Hannibal could gain the upper hand.

Their eyes locked and time slowed for a moment, both understanding exactly what the very next moment could hold.

And then Hannibal broke and ran. As Will hit the water behind him with a splash, Hannibal dug his toes into the sand and made for the treeline.

*

Bewildered, Will dragged himself from the water and collapsed onto the sand. He knew he shouldn’t leave himself vulnerable but the exertion had been so much. Every muscle in his body screamed.

And… the alpha had run. He could have attempted to end it all then and there, but instead he’d retreated.

It was clear from the way he stalked, even the way he held himself. The way he moved and how he had stood each time they were face to face - this alpha was an adept hunter. Not just relying on instinct and his hind brain, he had honed skills that he was deliberately not using to the fullest.

And then he ran.

Why?

In his haze of pain, Will rolled onto his back and tuned into the voices that echoed around him.

He was a hunter. He wanted to mate Will. But given the chance he ran. Was it a game? He wanted to draw it out? Play with his victim? Make a show of it? A display, a tableau…

The voices grew louder and started to drown out the thoughts in his head, the ones that said this all felt familiar somehow. The hunt, the game, the posturing. The ego…

“Are you kidding, Jimmy? I can’t believe you think that was a smart move. Lecter could have taken the omega right there.”

“I’m not debating the facts, Brian. I just think this game has more life in it. Now we might finally see a real hunt with this omega.”

“He certainly has been taking them down fast, that’s a good point. We’re going into another hour now and the sun is going down. At this rate we’re looking at an all night-- wait…” there was some muttering that Will couldn’t make out. Muffled voices like a mic being covered, and then they were crisp again.

“This is quite unprecedented, Jimmy. The studio has confirmed that this is going to run into the night. A first here at Mating Run. But!” The last word was raised to be heard over the crowd reaction. “BUT! As per the contract signed with all alpha contestants, they are to be given a suitable rest period and medical attention after six consecutive hours in the game.”

The crowd ahhed and booed at the news, a reaction that grew louder as the commentator continued.

“A drone will lead the alpha to a private area shortly and the Mating Run will resume in the morn-”

Will didn’t hear the rest of the words, as everything grew dark around him and all he could feel through the pain was the water lapping at his feet.

Chapter 3

Chapter Summary

Can Will and Hannibal come to some sort of an arrangement?

"Rest, Will." The words were a soft murmur and he felt a gentle hand on his shoulder restrain him as he immediately tried to sit up.

His fingers clenched, and where he had expected to find fistfuls of sand to use as a weapon, instead there was only the scratchy blanket of the bunk in the omega hut.

"What are you doing?" Will managed the words, wincing through the pain. A sharp pain in his shoulder. He turned his head to see that the alpha had a needle and was stitching up the stab wound in his shoulder from the seventh alpha.

"I made a bargain with the producer, a not entirely bright fellow called Matthew Brown. Very susceptible to the lightest of manipulations."

Will huffed, he knew the name. The producer that had actually fucking hit on him when he'd been prepped for the Mating Run arena.

"They wanted to pull me out until morning, but I promised that if they gave me a medical kit I would patch myself up and act on nothing until sunrise, and then the game will begin again. It took some convincing, but it is easy to make persuasive arguments to the small minded."

Will winced at the tug as the alpha tied off the last stitch.

"You promised not to mate me in the night, but why are you helping me? Just want to make things more interesting? Like it when omega's fight back?"

The alpha let out a soft chuckle and Will shouldn't find it as warming as he did. His empathic mind automatically considering what it might have been like to have the attention of such an alpha if they had met in another way. There was something compelling about him that Will couldn't quite put his finger on, something familiar.

"Not at all. I used to be a physician, it would be remiss of me not to heal you to the best of my ability. And I do that for the same reason that I did not attack you on the beach."

"You're trying to manipulate me too." Will said as the alpha wiped the wound clean and placed a gauze over it. "I assure you, I don't have a weak mind."

"I am," he admitted and then hesitated, "but not just to my own ends. But something mutually beneficial."

Will felt the truth in those words, as much as he felt the truth of a wider context. Perhaps this man did know him as he'd claimed, because Will was starting to believe the same might be true in return.

The familiarity of everything about this alpha spoke to missing pieces he'd been unable to find but might have done had he at any point ended up in an interview room with this man.

When the alpha's hands left him, Will sat up. He still hurt but there was a definite improvement, and Will could see that other wounds had been patched up too.

"I know you." Will said as the alpha packed bloody gauze into a bag and then removed the medical gloves he'd been wearing and disposed of them too.

"You do." The alpha stepped closer so that they stood a metre apart at most. "My name is Hannibal Lecter, I am a psychiatrist. I have occasionally consulted with the FBI on cases."

"But…" Will studied the alpha, "I don't know you from Quantico. Not in that sense."

"No, not in that sense." The smirk was back, slight as it was. "Tell me, Will. What was your last case? Before you were discovered and rather unceremoniously released from your employment with the FBI?"

*

Will tried to stay awake through the night, one eye trained on the alpha.

After he'd been patched up and the alpha even cobbled together some rations into something resembling an actual meal. And all the while Will maintained that the violence since he'd come to the arena made everything hazy, his feeble omegan brain couldn't quite recall all the details of any of his cases. He needed to stall.

He wasn't sure the alpha believed him, but Will had no intention of giving away anything. Better he even believe that Will was stalling whilst he tried to put the pieces together, than realise that he already had. That the moment Lecter had said those words, the pendulum had swung and he emerged in Will's mind as though from behind a veil, standing over the decorative crime scene of Will's last case.

The Ripper.

He knew he should be scared, but if this man had wanted to kill him, Will had no doubt he would have done it by now. Weakened as he was, all the accumulative disadvantages of his time in here, and yet Will knew that had The Ripper been the first alpha in this place, it would have all been over if he'd have wanted it to be.

It begged the question, why was he still unmated? Killing him publicly would be a stupid move, but mating him and then doing as he wished behind closed doors, that was definitely possible for such an accomplished serial killer.

Will sucked in a breath and opened his eyes, realising he'd started to drift.

The alpha was asleep, looking utterly peaceful and equally tame. Asleep he didn't look like a murderer, he looked vulnerable. And if Will could be confident in killing him before he roused enough to fight back, he might consider it.

Or so he told himself.

Will was burning with questions he needed answered, and losing the opportunity to do so left him feeling hollow.

Why do you do it? Why kill? Why those victims? Why the tableaus? How long have you been doing this? How many haven't we found? Does it feel good to kill? Does it feel like how I felt when I killed Hobbs? Why do I feel something so right when I look at the art you've created? Why does it feel like your are seeing right inside of me?

Will tried to shake the thought, remembering the Hobb's case vividly. The alphan father who killed his beta wife and daughter before Will had a chance to save them. He'd followed up some information, not knowing if it would take him anywhere, but as soon as the alpha saw him pull up, he knew. He pushed his wife out the door into Will's path, nothing he could do for her. But when Will got to him he held his daughter in front of him, and slit her throat before Will could pull the trigger. After he'd empty his bullets into the alpha, he tried to save her, but she bled out before backup even had chance to arrive.

He shuddered at the memory. It had felt good to kill Hobbs. It felt righteous. He'd felt powerful.

The deep, long breath from the alpha drew Will's attention. His eyes were still closed but it was clear he was scenting the air. He cleared his throat with a rumble as his eyes fluttered open.

He looked directly at Will as he drew another breath, his nose twitching.

"Your scent was… pleasing, before. But now… What are you thinking of? I hope it isn't too forward to say, under these circumstances, it has my mouth watering."

Will squirmed, trying to ignore the hint of arousal. Was it his thoughts about the Ripper? About Hobbs? He didn't want to think about it. Nor the fact that it became increasingly worse when the alpha scented him.

They looked at each other for a long moment before Lecter broke and shook his head.

"I apologise," he said gently. "I'm losing my manners in this place."

"It happens," Will replied gruffly. "Hard to have good manners when you're too busy fashioning weapons in order to take an omega against their will." He bit out the words, immediately aware of their ridiculousness, given that it hadn't happened at all. Lecter could have had him whilst he was unconscious and yet he did not.

"I made those weapons for defence, as I told you. I may not have wanted to harm you, but I'm not so foolish as to leave myself open to attack. And…" Lecter's face split into a sharp

grin, "I had to put on a show of it for the audience. This is merely theatre after all."

Will huffed, indignant as he shook his head. Yes, he considered it a show, entertainment, but to call it theatre seemed too elevated, too close to calling this ridiculousness 'art'.

"Yes, of course an alpha would consider the brutal forced mating of omegas to be theatre. I'm amazed Shakespeare didn't write plays about it."

Lecter shook his head and chuckled.

"I don't mean to dismiss your plight. I am merely stating the fact that this is how the public consider it. I have no opinion that extends beyond you."

"Is that so Doctor? And what is your opinion? As it pertains to me."

Lecter's smile was back and it was so disarming Will wanted to look away, instead he merely scowled.

"There are only two ways out of this for you. Dead or mated. And I have no wish to see you dead. But I have no desire to take you by force."

Will let out a bark of laughter at those words.

"So what is your plan then? To woo me? Win me over? In case you hadn't noticed I'm not active in the dating pool right now." Letting out another huff of laughter, Will turned slightly to try and rearrange the pillow he'd propped up against the wall behind him.

And in that split second the alpha was upon him, caging him against the wall, face hovering just above his own.

Will took in a sharp breath at the shock of it and instantly regretted doing so, the musk of the alpha was so rich and thick.

"Time is running out for games, Will. We only have a couple of hours until dawn. You know who I am."

Will swallowed, no longer in a position to deny it. "The Chesapeake Ripper."

The alpha instantly relaxed, his frame loosening though he still caged Will.

"I'm glad to know that I didn't underestimate you. I never thought I'd find someone smart enough to come so close to catching me."

"I haven't caught you," Will growled. "I was never close to it."

There was silence for a moment and then Lecter continued as though Will hadn't objected at all. "The benefit of consulting for the FBI is that you are given a level of trust that allows for innocent enquiry. I've seen how close you've come to catching me. You can see me entirely. I know you as you know me. We've never met but I create art and you interpret it. It links us together. I can see you as you see me."

“And had we met, I’d have known it was you?” Will prodded, wishing he could ignore the words for how true they rang.

“Eventually. And I’d have wanted you to. I want you to see me as much as I know you want me to see you.”

Will let out a shuddering breath and they looked at each other for a long minute.

*

Time was running out until the game had to resume. Hannibal couldn’t imagine they would allow this for a second night should neither a mating or death take place once the sun came up. This was his last chance to convince Will.”

But it was difficult to find the words now that he was so close to such beauty as he had never seen before. Eventually it was Will who spoke.

“Please move,” Will growled the words, a moment before his hands met Hannibal’s chest and tried to push him away.

Hannibal shook his head and leaned in closer, feeling Will’s breath on his lips. The omega didn’t push him away.

“You have to decide, Will. To mate or to die. Mate with me,” he said softly, lowering his mouth to Will’s jaw and nuzzling at him. “Then we can leave together and I will give you everything your heart desires.”

“And if my heart’s desire is to see you behind bars?” Will asked sharply, though Hannibal didn’t miss the spike in his scent and his heart rate, and he still did not push Hannibal away, despite the physical contact.

“I don’t think it is.” Hannibal purred.

“There’s nothing in any of this for me,” Will protested again, finally shoving Hannibal hard enough that he did have to back off slightly to maintain balance.

“That’s not true,” Hannibal replied, capturing Will’s determined gaze with his own.

“No? I either end up with a mate I don’t want, or I die.”

“Unless this is something bigger than yourself.” Hannibal countered. “You have an audience now Will, no better way to draw attention to your plight.”

“My plight? You mean omega suppression?” Will cocked a brow, his expression incredulous.

“Indeed,” Hannibal replied, hoping this appeal worked. He had no idea of Will’s true feelings on the politics of it, beyond know Will to be an omega that had had to pretend to be a beta in order to live the life he had wished.

“And how do you suppose I do that?” Will huffed, rolling his eyes. “Should I kill you? Live on air? That would certainly show that omegas aren’t as weak as society believes.”

Hannibal grinned, delighted in a rather tingly way at the thought of Will killing anyone at all. “You could, but the victory would be short lived and there would come another alpha, then another until you are either mated or killed. You cannot hold out forever.”

Will glowered, but there was no debating that point. Perhaps somewhat hypocritical, attacking an alpha whilst they were at their most vulnerable - mating - was very taboo. That would most likely turn the audience against Will and result in a rather abrupt end to his Mating Run experience.

“What then?” Will narrowed his eyes.

“You take me.” Hannibal purred.

“Take you? Where?” Will’s brow was creased but then understanding dawned quickly. “You can’t be serious.”

“Your only way out of here Will is to be mated or murdered. I’d much prefer the former.”

Will’s brow creased all the deeper and Hannibal’s not sure whether he found the idea preposterous or was actually considering it.

“You’d submit to me?” Will finally asked, nothing but disbelief in his tone.

“I already have. I did before I even entered the arena. I was always your prey Will,” Hannibal explained softly, pressing forward again. This time Will’s hands, still pressed to his chest, did not push him back. “I wanted you the moment I realised who you were, the moment I saw what you were capable of. I’d do anything to have you. I’d pull strings to get into this ridiculous farce, I’d submit to you in front of millions of viewers. I will further the plight of omegan rights, as long as it results in us being together.”

Will’s breathing is ragged and his pupils are dilated. If he shifts his body now, Hannibal realises, and moves fully over the omega, he’d be able to feel how hard he is. And the same would be true in return.

Their lips are almost touching when Will speaks.

“Why do you do it? How do you choose your victims?” His words are barely more than a whisper, and tone laced with desire.

“If it is my mate’s wish, I would tell him everything he wanted to know. I’d even show him. Once we’re mated.”

The whine that left Will’s throat at that was clearly involuntary, and it sent a shiver through Hannibal’s core.

Chapter 4

Chapter Summary

Will has to confront the fact that no matter what, he's either going to leave the Mating Run dead or mated.

Will woke, blinking as the light through the door blinded him.

“It will be interesting to see what happens now, Brian. This has been an unprecedented…” He heard Jimmy’s voice echoing around the arena and carrying to his hut. “Here’s the alpha now…”

Will sat quickly and looked around to confirm that he was indeed alone.

The events of so short a time ago came to mind. They had been so close they could have sunk into each other’s skin then. And it had been difficult to hold back, but he had. There was no denying that, nor Hannibal’s promise that echoed around his mind. If they were mated, Hannibal - The Ripper - would tell him everything. Would show him.

The thought made him shiver with anticipation.

And Hannibal was right. No matter what Will did or how hard he tried, he only had two ways out of this hell hole - died or mated. Time was running out for him to decide which. And really, it was no decision at all.

“What’s the alpha doing, Jimmy?”

“I’m not sure, Brian. It looks like… Yes, he’s definitely trying to find the edge of the arena.”

“Is he looking for a way out?”

There were mutterings from the crowd, confused and unsure. But for Will, everything came into clear focus.

This was part of the alpha’s ruse to set the scene. Now was when Will had to act, now or never if they were going to end this the way Hannibal wanted. The way Will wanted.

He sucked in a breath and scrubbed his hands over his face. Now. Now or never. Now.

Will shoved himself off the bed and staggered towards the door of the hut, regaining his bearings and strength as he went.

It wouldn't be bad, he reasoned as he beat his way through the foliage. Of all the alphas he might have been forcibly mated with, this wasn't just the best of a bad bunch, this was a perfect match. He knew that deep within him, in a place that had never ached for an alpha before. This was the Ripper, this was *his* alpha.

But Hannibal had been right, they knew each other, and they both knew what the other could be capable of. They would never meet anyone else so entirely meant for them. And so Will moved as quickly as he could. Not just to make this a believable show, but because he was eager. He was so very eager to mate with Hannibal Lecter and get the fuck out of here.

*

"Here he comes, Jimmy!" The last word barely audible as the crowd began to make noises, cheering and chattering, a great deal of confusion.

Good.

Hannibal hid his smirk as looked back up the beach and saw Will emerge from the treeline. At the sight of the omega, he stumbled. Nothing too dramatic, but surely believable. He scrambled away from the wall and went to the hydraulically sealed doors he had entered through.

"Let me out!" he bellowed as he banged at the doors.

"I'm… I'm not sure what's happening here, Brian. I think the alpha is trying to escape."

A drone zoomed overhead, ignoring Hannibal completely, instead going for a close up of the seemingly crazed omega that strode towards him. Of course, they had to go for the entertainment value. They'd want to frame Will as an omega now completely unhinged. So unhinged the alpha wanted to escape.

That wasn't something Hannibal could allow. He knew exactly the picture he wanted to paint.

Feigning resignation, Hannibal turned and took a few steps towards the advancing omega. Close enough that the drone would be able to pick up anything uttered between them.

He held up his hands in placation, even as he frowned with abject disgust.

"Back off! I've changed my mind. You're not what I thought you'd be like. I don't want an omega like you. You're not worthy of an alpha like me."

There were gasps and murmurings from the crowd and Will only faltered in his step for a moment before understanding.

He sneered, and Hannibal felt himself harden a little at the sight of it. This really was going to be quite something.

"Too late now." Will scoffed, his gait changing. Before he had been stomping forward, easily written off as feral. But now he sauntered, taking one of his sharpened sticks from his belt

and playing it over in his hands. “You should have thought of that before you came here. Thinking you could tame me,” Will spat the words.

“You don’t need taming,” Hannibal countered, “you’re not fit for any alpha. With your corrupt ideas on omegan rights. If I’d wanted to breed a bitch like you, I could have had my fill.”

“No,” Will laughed. “You wanted someone broken. A toy. Well, I’m not that. But you?” They were closer now, circling each other at a little over two metres apart. There was no noise from the crowd, for once utter silence from the audience and commentators as this bizarre and unprecedented situation played out.

“You?” Will laughed and shook his head. “You shouldn’t have tried to woo me before knowing whether you wanted me or not. Because now you don’t have a choice. An eminent doctor, isn’t that what you told me? Independently wealthy. Strong, viral, intelligent. You’re the perfect fucking alpha, even if you do say so yourself. And why should I settle for anything less than perfection?”

Will lunged then, and Hannibal sidestepped just in time, though he stumbled.

He couldn’t make this look too easy. Even so, Will was on him in a second and he only just managed to push the omega off as he regained his feet.

“You think I’ll mate with you?” Hannibal scoffed, before turning from Will and looking directly at the drone, “get me out of here, now!”

Will was on him again, and this time Hannibal caught the attack. They struggled together, neither putting in enough effort to really overpower the other, instead they remained locked together as they tried to best each other until finally they hit the sand and continued to roll and fight.

It wasn’t until then that the noise came back. The audience was unsure. Could they root for an alpha who wanted to leave? Could they… root for the omega? The commentators finally rejoined and the confusion was clear in their tones.

“I’m not sure what to make of this turn of events. This is unprecedented, in any Mating Run franchise, worldwide.”

“I’m just hearing from the producers now, Jimmy. They are uncertain whether the alpha is permitted to leave. The lawyers are looking over the contract.”

“Well, I guess we can only hope then that the omega doesn’t kill him befo-”

The sound went dead again and Hannibal was sure he heard a collective gasp as he managed to wrestle Will down, getting him on all fours and covering him as though he intended to mate him.

Will growled beneath him, the effort no longer fake as he tried to break the hold.

“You lied to me,” Will growled with venom.

“No,” Hannibal breathed the words against his neck, taking in the omega’s captivating scent. “I am creating theatre. We must whet the appetite.”

They struggled a little longer, until Hannibal finally allowed Will to shrug him off. More than shrug him - Will kicked off from the sand and launched himself, leaving Hannibal behind as he came to a stand a foot away.

He turned back to Hannibal with a snarl. “And why shouldn’t omegas get what they want for a change?”

*

Will had almost forgotten the audience was there again, when the sound split his ears. The moment the words had left his mouth there had been cheers. And amongst that, then increasing, boos. And then shouting.

What the fuck was happening? He looked over at Hannibal who was still half crouched on the sand, the slightest smirk on his face that Will wasn’t sure anyone else would even notice.

After a moment of locked eyes, of cheers and screams and the sounds of violence, Hannibal broke for the treeline.

“He’s running!” One of the commentators observed, his voice wavering and unsure, as though uncertain whether he was meant to continue doing his job as he had to shout the words over the turmoil of the audience.

When Will took off after him the cheers increased, jubilant shouting as Will was hot on Hannibal’s heels. He flung himself into the air and landed on Hannibal, taking him back down onto the sand a clear metre from the trees.

The cheering was insane, it was so loud the commentators could no longer be heard. The only sounds as loud were the shouts, the calls for order. The calls for the omegas in the audience to retake their seats, to act appropriately.

Will blinked.

It was enough hesitation for Hannibal to throw him off and then pin him down. He snarled above Will, looking like he truly was disgusted, but Will could feel how hard the alpha was against him. He could feel every inch of the man and the swell of his knot.

If the drone was nearby there was no way it was picking up anything now, not with the raucous mayhem from the audience.

“This is it, Will. With this you get everything you want. You set a precedent for omegas, you have already set them to a practical riot. Can you hear them? That’s all for you. Now you just need to seal the deal. Then we will both be free of this place.”

With a cry, Will threw Hannibal off of him and then was on top of him, pinning the alpha down.

“Yes… Hannibal hissed. Take what you want, Will.”

Will was shaking, he was hard and wet and so fucking desperate. All amplified by what was happening around them. The reaction this was causing in the omegas, the cries of the alphas for order that were clearly going unheeded.

“Do it!” Hannibal spat, and Will balled his fist.

*

The blow didn’t knock Hannibal out, but it had been a hard enough punch to his jaw to disorientate him. Long enough for Will to pull back and rip open his jumpsuit.

Hannibal let Will work, feigning his disorientation a few moments longer so that Will was unhindered as he pulled Hannibal’s cock from the jumpsuit. He felt Will’s wonderful hand pumping him in fast, long strokes and wanted to praise him. Not just for how great it felt, but the quick thinking - the way he covered up how hard Hannibal already was with this bit of theatre.

Once Will released him and pulled open his own, much easier to access, jumpsuit, Hannibal ended one ruse and took up another. No longer disoriented he tried to fight Will off, and took another - albeit slightly less hard - fist to the jaw.

What this must look like! Hannibal considered. It would be too much. He had to show that he wasn’t being forced, that Will had successfully tamed him instead of the other way around.

“Kiss me,” Hannibal muttered, feeling the pain in his jaw.

“What?” Will frowned, his hands frantically pulling the rest of their clothes away as he came to straddle Hannibal fully.

Hannibal held back a whimper as he felt Will’s wetness press against his cock.

His hands shot to Will’s hips but not to stop him.

“They have to know I’ve submitted to you. That this isn’t against my will. That you are better than any alpha.” Hannibal growled out the words, low and husky as lust filled him.

Will understood then and stopped.

They were frozen together as the crowd screamed around them.

Then Will laid a gentle hand on Hannibal’s cheek, moving it up to brush away some hair from his forehead. Their eyes locked and Will began to move forward. He wasn’t even half way when Hannibal surged up and took his mouth, in a hungry, passionate kiss.

*

Will groaned into Hannibal's mouth, their hands roaming as they tried to know every part of each other.

The sounds from the audience now were entirely incoherent. Just a mess of noise that could either be negative or positive. And none of it mattered in that moment.

Not as the kiss turned into something more gentle, and their hands moved a little more delicately.

Hannibal pulled away enough to breathe words against Will's lips, "you have to take me. You have to be the aggressor."

Will understood his meaning and sat back a little, repositioned. And then he threw his head back in a long, loud moan of pleasure as he sank down onto Hannibal's cock, taking him to the knot.

There was a sudden silence that left Will's ears ringing.

And then all he could hear were moans of pleasure, some his, some Hannibal's, as Hannibal took his hips once more and held him as Will rode him.

It was unspeakable. This wasn't the way an alpha had an omega submit. It was a breeding position or nothing. What they might do in the privacy of their own homes was one thing, but to think that their mating would not involve an omega presenting was unthinkable.

"Fuck," Will uttered, falling forward, into more, deeper kisses as his hips rocked and Hannibal's knot rubbed against his own small cock with each press. "I can't believe you're letting me do this." Will muttered as the enormity of it suddenly weighed upon him.

"I'd do anything to have you, I thought I made that clear." Hannibal replied, even as Will could feel how tense he was. How much control it was taking not to throw Will off and mount him like a good omega.

"Bite me, Will." Hannibal ground out the words as his eyes rolled in pleasure. "You have to bite me."

Will's breath caught in his chest. This wasn't how it was meant to be - an alpha had to bite first. In order to be mated it was the alpha that needed to bite the omega to form the bond. Or so society would have it. Science had been clear for decades - a bond was created by the mutual biting, who bit first had no relevance. But each study was discredited by the alphas intent on holding power, on suppressing omegas.

Will drew in that breath and then fucked himself down onto Hannibal's knot, taking it deep. They both cried out in pleasure.

And then Hannibal let out a primal, pleasured and soul aching scream as he threw his head back and Will's teeth sank into his mating gland.

Chapter 5

Chapter Summary

What happens in the Mating Run has real-world repercussions.

Will felt the rush of blood in his mouth as he bit down, felt the instant bond between them that flooded his senses and made his eyes dilate to the point of pain. He closed them to keep out the bright light of the arena as he pulled back, head thrown back and panting, blood dripping down his chin.

There was screaming, distant sounds of pandemonium and then the sound of feedback, so loud that Will had to cover his ears. He opened his eyes to see Hannibal doing the same, as they both winced in pain. And then it was gone.

No noise but the sounds of their panted breaths.

Hannibal's knot had loosened from him and when Will shifted the alpha slid out along with a stream of thick come. Will closed his eyes again just for a moment to savour the sensation, before he got his bearings.

"Something's wrong," Hannibal said, voicing Will's concerns.

With a wince, Will stood up, pulling his mess of a jumpsuit back around him and fastening it as best he could.

Hannibal got to his feet and started to do the same, until they both paused.

There was noise again, but this time faint, not over the speakers. The sounds of mayhem, screams and chants in the audience, so loud that it could be heard through the thick barrier that separated the invisible audience from the arena itself.

Alpha and omega looked at each other, but neither could speak before they heard the sound of gunfire ring out. It was a distant, muffled put-put-put, followed by even more screams.

"We have to get out," Will said, his body tense as he looked around him, and then focused on the direction of the hut. "They replenish the hut from somewhere, we can find--"

Will's words were cut off as the main door began to open. It slid up at high speed, not the slow, teasing way it usually did to reveal each new alpha. The sound now spilling in, a din filling the arena.

Will grabbed hold of Hannibal's hand, about to tug him towards the hut, but then the door was completely up and there stood a wall of security, all with their guns trained on them.

*

Hannibal tried not to bare his teeth at the intruders. Everything still felt raw, that post bonding, postcoital vulnerability interrupted in such a violent way.

He felt Will's hand in his and squeezed it, trying to reassure even though he was as uncertain of the situation they found themselves in.

"What's the meaning of this?" Hannibal demanded.

"On your knees," came the single response, which neither he nor Will obeyed.

"I have a contract with the studio, we have mated. I am free to leave with my omega."

"No one's going anywhere!" The same man replied, just as passionately before. But Hannibal didn't miss the fidgeting of a couple of the others.

"Under whose authority are you acting?" Hannibal asked, and when there was no immediate reply, he continued, "I'd like you to call my lawyer."

"I don't…" one of the others spoke quietly, hesitantly, "I don't know if we should be doing this…"

The first who had spoken, the one in charge, turned quickly on the man. Gun raised at him, "You'll follow orders."

The air was thick with tension as they stood on the edge of potential dissension. And perhaps some sort of rebellion might have happened if there wasn't a sudden roar of sound.

The sound of a hoard coming ever closer.

"Sir?" One of the men questioned, barely audible over the noise of the rabble. Another broke and ran.

He was almost at the raised door when people began spilling in. They looked savage. Clothes torn, some bloody. A riot of people all flowing into the dome like viscous fluid.

"Hannibal," Will tugged his hand and was running before Hannibal even realised he was following.

The people washed over the armed guards, one shot rang out but that was all that was managed before they were trampled by the crowd.

*

Will kept running in the direction of the hut. Hannibal kept pace with him, their hands gripped tightly together. It was only once they started into the trees that Will glanced back to see what was happening.

There was no sign at all of the armed men, only a huge crowd, some cheering on the beach, others starting to rip apart anything they could get their hands on, even clawing at the walls until panels started to come loose.

“They’re tearing the place apart,” Will said, quickening his pace.

“Let’s hope they don’t want to do the same to us,” Hannibal replied.

Will burst into the hut, turning once he felt Hannibal behind him.

“We need to barricade this.”

“Or find a way out,” Hannibal said as he glanced around furtively. “Where do they come in to restock the hut?”

Will shook his head, “it must be somewhere behind the hut, or at the back?”

“Maybe a false door,” Hannibal replied. Will watched as he went to the back wall of the hut and felt every part of it for a seam or a crack.

“Good guess,” a voice came out of the shadows.

From the back corner, behind one of the supply shelves, a man emerged, gun levelled at them.

*

Hannibal felt every instinct that was telling him to be calm, as calm as he had always been as a calculated killer. But now there were other instincts trying to come to the fore, ones that screamed at him to protect his mate.

How naive alphas were to think that omegas were the weaker dynamic, when he was now compromised by this omega in a way he never had been before in his life.

“Mr Brown,” Hannibal acknowledged. “I advise you to put the weapon down.”

Matthew Brown laughed, and waved the gun around, as if daring them to take action, before finally pointing the gun directly at Will.

“Gonna poke me with a stick?” He taunted. “Think you’re clever,” he addressed Will. “With hidden rocks and all that shit? Wouldn’t be so easy if the alphas had been armed, would it?” He jiggled the gun again, but still kept it aimed at Will.

“Put it down,” Hannibal growled. “This is your last warning Mr Brown.”

Hannibal tensed, ready to attack. Ready to do anything he had to, but hoping it wouldn’t come to that.

“I knew this would fucking happen. That’s why I have this!” he waved the gun again, “you fucking bleeding heart omega rights shitheads. You want to destroy everythi-”

A click echoed around the small space.

“Put it down,” the deep voice came from beyond the open door. He felt Will turn behind him, looking towards the voice, though Hannibal kept his eyes on Brown.

“Put. It. Down!”

“Good to see you, Jack.” Hannibal said as the man made his way into the room, putting himself between them and Brown.

“Doctor,” he acknowledged. “Will.”

“For fucks--” Brown started and then swung his gun towards Jack Crawford.

The sound of Jack’s shot boomed, making all their ears ring, muffling the thud of Brown dropping to the floor.

“Jack?” Will asked, “what are you doing here?”

Will looked between Hannibal and Jack, his expression one of confusion.

“We’ve got to get you out of here,” Jack holstered his gun and turned to them both, “back that way.”

Jack left the hut and pushed ahead of them through the foliage, towards the edge of the dome where a panel was slid across, revealing what had to be the access they had been looking for.

“How are you here?” Will asked Jack as they hurried to the panel.

“I believe I mentioned that I have previously consulted with the FBI?” Hannibal was the one to respond and Jack continued to lead the way. “When I first saw you in here, I assumed from your biography that you must know Jack if not work with him directly. When I was accepted as a contestant I contacted Jack and asked him for his support.”

“Support? You were expecting this?”

Jack turned to them then and answered for himself as they all walked the long corridor, “I don’t think anyone was expecting *this*,” Jack huffed.

“Quite,” Hannibal replied. “I knew that you would not be easy to mate, and I wished for a friendly face to be on hand when we left. If it came to it I would have told you about Jack, and that he wanted to get you out as well.”

“Lucky for you I was here,” Jack rumbled the words, sounding as put out as ever.

“Indeed,” Hannibal agreed. “I hadn’t expected it to come to this, but as soon as things started to get out of hand, I knew I could rely on you.”

Jack made a harrumph sound and pushed open the door at the end of the corridor.

“You didn’t tell me.” Will muttered. “You wanted to manipulate me.”

Hannibal turned and smiled at Will. “If you knew that I had used my connections at the FBI to find others on your side, would that have made your answer any different? You still only had two choices.”

Will let out a heavy sigh and pushed past him to follow Jack out.

*

The feeling in Will’s chest was something like heartburn.

He felt a mix of emotions and none of them were good. He wanted to feel betrayed by Hannibal for not knowing about Jack, but Hannibal was right. What difference would it have really made? In reality what he was feeling was fear and anger. He had been since they’d heard the rioting, and then more so since the armed guards had arrived.

“What’s happening outside, Jack?” Will asked as they walked another hallway. Jack only stopped when they reached a door and he looked at Will before pushing it open.

“Chaos,” he replied.

As the door swung open, sound filtered in. Somewhere in the distance there was shouting, somewhere closer the sound of glass shattering. Whatever was happening was spreading all over.

“Is there a safe way out?” Hannibal asked.

Jack nodded, “I scoped the place out. I have an unmarked SUV waiting in the basement garage, we can take the back stairs. Just need to get there.” Jack carried on walking, expecting them to follow through the office they’d found themselves in. That led through to a production room, an interview room, one room filled with a wall of screens with each of the cameras still streaming live.

“Fuck,” Will muttered as he stopped in front of them. First to really understand the scale of what he had been in, and then as he watched the people tearing the place apart.

“What’s happening?”

“Revolution, I believe.” Hannibal replied, as he took Will’s elbow and urged him on.

“Something like that,” Jack agreed as they moved into the next room.

A gasp sounded and two people sitting at two of the many computer consoles that filled this room turned to look at them.

“Oh good, it’s you.” One of the young men said, looking relieved as he turned back to what he was doing.

The other man stood up from his desk and went to them. His gaze almost made Will uncomfortable, and probably would have done if he was an alpha, but it was a beta and he was looking at him with admiration, maybe even adoration.

“I’m Barney. We’ve been waiting here for you.” He turned back to the other young man, “Lock all the doors.”

“Already on it.”

Will could see on his screen that the doors they had come through were all locking one by one all the way back to the one Jack, and Matt Brown, had come through.

“You need to go that way,” Barney pointed at one of the doors, “we will open and relock each door as you go so you can get to the parking lot safely.”

“What’s going on?” Will asked.

“We’re, um,” the two men looked at each other, clearly unsure whether they should divulge. “We’re part of an omega rights movement. We infiltrated the studio years ago, just in case having someone here would prove handy.”

“Why do I feel like I’m part of something I don’t really understand?” Will asked, trying to take it all in.

Both men chuckled, and Barney nodded, “Yeah, it was sort of a surprise to us too. The movement has been primed to act for years, just waiting for a catalyst, but this was definitely not one we had considered. We knew the show itself might cause some backlash, but this? Will, I’m not sure you realise but, when you um, did what you did,” his gaze flitted to Hannibal and back to Will, “the audience imploded. The omegas there with their alphas, all cheering and not allowing their alphas to rein them in. And then…”

He drifted off and his smile faded.

“Here,” he led them over to the consol. Jack remained by the door, tense and alert, but Will and Hannibal followed. Barney punched a few buttons on his keyboard and footage of the studio audience came up. It was one of the sections of seating around the dome, able to look in on the action as well as follow along on giant screens when the contestants were out of sight or to give a close up view. On the screen Will could see that he was biting Hannibal.

The sound was off, but Will could see one person stand and cheer, then another. A few here and there and before long, almost everyone omega was on their feet and the alphas were trying to get them under control.

It was mayhem. But then, an alpha stood, trying to get his omega back into her seat. When she resisted him he slapped her so hard across the face that she went down to the floor.

Will swallowed and watched, trembling as the crowd turned. Every omega within lunging distance was on the man, pulling him down and beating him. That was when the violence began and the armed guards came in.

Will looked away.

“We’ve kept the cameras rolling, we’re streamed it all. What you did, the audience reaction, the violence. The…” he shook his head. “We’ve been monitoring the news feeds and police channel, there are riots happening all over. Do you have somewhere to go?”

“My home, Baltimore,” Hannibal started but the other man shook his head, not looking up from his screen.

“No, Baltimore is like a warzone. All the cities are.”

“Your house, Will.” Jack offered and Will nodded.

“It’s an old farmhouse, off the beaten track.”

“Yeah,” Barney nodded, “go there. Stay there until this has all blown over.”

Hannibal took Will’s arm and tried to guide him away, but Will stopped.

“Wait, what are you two going to do? Shouldn’t you leave?”

They both looked at him then and the quieter of the two shook his head.

“This is what we signed on for. It’s more important than either of us. We’re going to keep the stream going, keep sending out whatever we can. Make everyone see.”

“We’ll lock the doors.” Barney added, “And… Hey, if it all turns out in our favour, we’ve got nothing to worry about.”

“Okay,” Will replied tentatively. “Thank you.”

“Will,” Jack hurried him and one of the men pressed a button. They heard a door unlock and pushed it open. “Time to get the hell out of here.”

Chapter 6

Chapter Summary

The competition is over but Will is still running.

Chapter Notes

Yeah... this is going to be seven chapters now. Intending to post the final chapter on AO3 on 3rd August.

“Heads down!” Jack shouted over his shoulder as the SUV hurtled out of the underground parking lot. They were in back, space blankets from the trunk were spread over them to keep them out of sight as they felt the vehicle speed and lurch over and over as Jack tried to navigate the throngs of people.

“This is fucking crazy,” Jack growled and Will squeezed his eyes shut.

He’d never expected this, and he wasn’t sure he wanted it. Whatever it was that was happening right now. A riot? A coup?

“It’s alright, Will.” Hannibal’s words were in his ear. The alpha was practically spooned against him, but both of their bodies were tense as they tried to keep a distance in the small space.

“Nothing about this is alright,” Will growled back, trying to ignore the slick feeling between his legs and the throb of the bite on his neck. With everything that had happened he had been completely unable to process what they had done. He had expected they would fuck, mate and then be let out. At most he expected there wouldn’t be the usual pomp and fanfare that accompanied this sort of ridiculous spectacle, he definitely hadn’t expected this.

“What have we done?” Will muttered, to himself more than anything. But he didn’t resist - couldn’t - when Hannibal lowered his face to Will’s neck and nuzzled him, gentling him.

Will wanted to hate it and pull away, he’d never wanted to be affected by an alpha like this. But all he could manage was a huff. Because the truth was, he wanted Hannibal. If he had to take an alpha then he could never have hoped for one as perfect for him as Hannibal. One that reflected so much of himself. They were identically different.

“Hold on!” Jack’s shout filled the air and then Will felt the SUV go airborne. He came down with a thud as the vehicle landed. Now in the footwell with Hannibal next to him, as the SUV careened along. Will could vividly imagine every swerve and bouncing off of every curb. What he hadn’t expected was the sudden stop that had both him and Hannibal in a pile.

“Stay down,” Jack growled and then the door opened and closed with a slam that rocked the SUV. Shots were fired, at which Will felt Hannibal reflexively curled around Will, protective. Will shrugged him off, an automatic response of his own. He was no stranger to gunfire, he hadn’t lived his life like a sheltered omega and Hannibal needed to remember that. He wasn’t going to get nervous unless Jack didn’t return.

They both held their breaths as they listened, making no move to pull themselves from each other completely. Finally, after a few minutes there was hurried talking outside and both doors opened.

Moments later the SUV was off again, racing along the road.

“Are you okay back there?” A feminine voice this time, and one that was vaguely familiar from a fleeting interaction at a work function - Bella Crawford.

“Hold on,” Jack said again before any of them could say anything more. The gears crunched as he forced the SUV to its ultimate speed. Will just hoped the bumps here and there weren’t people.

*

Hannibal blinked his eyes open and felt a palm against his face. It took him a moment to open his eyes and see Will there, concerned as he loomed over him.

“We have to move, are you alright?”

He noticed a fresh cut on Will’s forehead and felt an ache in his arm as he tried to move.

“Did I black out?” Hannibal asked, his words slurring a little.

“Just for a moment. We were run off the road.” Will moved back to give him space and he struggled to sit up. Once he was upright he could see that the SUV was not. They were off the road, nose down in a ditch.

“Here,” Jack’s wife passed a bottle of water to him from where she stood outside of the vehicle, also looking ruffled.

“Jack?” Hannibal enquired.

“He’s fine. I think the airbag broke his nose, but he’s fine.” Will replied as he backed out of the SUV, giving Hannibal room to follow.

“I’m fine,” Jack echoed from somewhere out on the road, a nasally sound as he no doubt had hold of his nose to try and stem the bleeding.

“First aid kit?” Hannibal asked as he shuffled along the seat until his legs were out, his head throbbing with an intense pain that he knew was likely a concussion.

“In the back,” Jack pointed and Will went to fetch it.

Within minutes they were all on the side of the road, Hannibal chugging painkillers dry and Jack with cotton wool wads up his nostrils. They were the worst of the injuries with both Will and Bella only suffering minor contusions. Hannibal tried to assess them all as thoroughly as he could in the dying light with his thundering headache.

“We can walk from here,” Will said as he studied the road, clearly recognising it. “Best to stay off the road though. I don’t think people are in their right minds.”

Hannibal looked around and to him the road looked identical in both directions, other than a car just off the road and into a field on the opposite side. The driver side door was wide open and there was no sign of anyone. Jack noticed his glances and spoke up.

“Fled the scene. I don’t think it was intentional. Just lost control at an unmanageable speed.”

“We can cut through there,” Will pointed across a field beyond the ditch the SUV was embedded in. “It’ll be a couple of hours, at least. Are you all fit enough?” He looked at Hannibal.

His head was in a vice, an intense pressure that made his eyes hurt too, but he wanted them to be somewhere safe, wanted his mate somewhere safe and secure.

Hannibal gave a nod, even as his head throbbed. Jack grabbed his go back from the back of the SUV and Will packed the first aid bag back together and slung it over his shoulder.

“It’s going to be harder going once it gets dark.”

*

Will was right. After an hour or so, the sun was almost entirely gone and the trees obscured much of what was left of the light. Hannibal was conflicted. He wasn’t sure how much longer he could go on, but his drive, instincts, kept him going. His need to stay with Will and protect him made it impossible for him to stop.

He felt immeasurable relief as they broke through into a more controlled area, little used paths but paths nonetheless, lay ahead of them.

“Not far now,” Will told them, “we can follow this trail and then cut across the Dulles Toll Road. A little more woodland and then we’ll be on my property. Twenty minutes, maybe half an hour.”

It was almost harder now that he knew they were so close. He trudged on, everything a blur. He didn’t even realise he’d begun to collapse until Jack caught him, a moment before his face hit the asphalt of the toll road.

“Hannibal?” Will cried out. And Hannibal found himself strangely enjoying the concern in his voice.

“It’s nothing,” Hannibal waved them all off as he sat on the road. “Just a mild concussion.”

Will let out a gruff sound as he frowned down at him, and Hannibal felt fully rebuked.

“We have to keep moving,” Jack told them, watching along the deserted road. A moment later they could all hear it, a speeding vehicle coming their way. “I don’t think either of you should risk being seen.”

Hannibal nodded and tried to get to his feet, having to shut his eyes against the pain. A moment later he felt himself lifted as Will and Jack took an arm each. They were across the road and into more woodland before the car sped past them.

*

Will’s heart was pounding. Something like flight or fight. It had started the first day he’d stepped into the arena and it was yet to let up. He was so close to home, to the safest place he had ever known, and it still hadn’t stopped. He still didn’t feel safe.

Something was wrong.

“Wait,” he spoke in hushed tones and stopped. “We’re almost there, but something’s…”

“I smell it too,” Bella whispered, her eyes wide.

“Alpha urine?” Jack frowned, turning his head to scent around him.

“Territory marking,” Hannibal added, disgust scrunching his face as much as the headache he had to be enduring.

Will clenched his fists. Anger boiled up inside him as he took another step. Someone was on his property with bad intent.

“Will,” Jack hissed, “It could be dangerous.”

Behind him he heard Jack unholster his gun and follow.

“This is my home,” Will growled to nobody in particular, every instinct crying out to defend what was his like any omega would their family and the home they had made.

They broke through the bushes and the back of the house came into view. There were no lights on, the door was closed, but there were several cars pulled up on his driveway at the side of the house.

He could scent five or six individuals, but after that it got difficult to discern.

“Anywhere else we can go?” Jack asked.

Will shook his head and repeated, “this is my home.” Before Jack could stop him he broke into a run.

*

He hadn’t seen the first alpha until it was too late and he was in the dirt.

“Here’s the little bitch now,” the alpha growled, grabbing Will’s jaw hard. “Figured if you’re gonna get all our omegas riled up, we’d have you instead. Show you how a real alpha claims--”

The words we cut short as Will struck like a wild animal, taking the man’s hand into his mouth and clamping down hard until he felt the bones crunch.

Screaming, the alpha fell backwards, landing on his back as Will regained his own feet.

Three more came running at him, skidding to a halt as a shot rang out in the air above him.

“Disperse now,” Jack barked at the alphas, all of whom looked about ready to challenge him. He couldn’t shoot them all at once.

“Looks like the little slut already found a new alpha,” one taunted though he didn’t step forward. All of them were frozen in place to see who would make the first move.

It was Will.

He heard Jack curse as he flung himself at the nearest alpha, his teeth bared and immediately at the man’s throat.

“Stand down, Will!” Jack still had the gun trained on the other two as Will bit down on the alpha’s throat and his cry came out as a gurgle.

Will only, finally, looked up when he heard the thud of Jack landing on the ground. Another alpha had come from somewhere behind them and was trying to wrestle the gun away from Jack.

The opportunity was quickly taken by the two other alphas to jump onto Will, trying to drag him off and towards them until they were almost pulling him in two.

A snarl that Will recognised deep in his gut cut through the air as one of the alphas released him. Hannibal was on him, trying to smash his head into the dirt, but moments later he was flung off, leaving Will’s alpha blinking in confusion. He was clearly always used to having the upper hand, a strong and skilled hunter, and now suffering from a head trauma that could only be made worse.

With an almost inhuman roar Will took hold of the arm that was trying to pull him away. His strength seemed limitless as he pushed forward, getting the alpha off balance and then twisting his arm until the snapping sound was followed by a scream.

When he looked back, Hannibal was on the ground with the alpha on top of him, his arm across Hannibal's throat and starting to press down. He seemed to be waiting for Will's attention to do anything further, confirmed when he laughed and taunted, "what are you going to do now, little bitch? With no alphas to protect you?"

He was still laughing when Will launched himself across the short distance between them. His momentum took them off of Hannibal until they were both rolling towards the woodpile at the side of the house.

They struggled together for a moment until the alpha was on top, growling down angrily at Will, who was now the one laughing.

"You're everything that's wrong with alphas," Will taunted as he felt around with the hand the alpha hadn't even bothered to restrain. "Dumber than a box of rocks. And thinking I need an alpha to protect me."

With that Will grabbed the shaft of his wood axe and swung it up, catching a blow against the alpha's head. He rolled them then, easily. Now on top he brought the axe down on wide-eyes, cleaving into the alpha's skull.

If there had been any alphas still able to walk they must have been in the cars that quickly tore away from the property as Jack stumbled towards him, nose bloody once more.

"We need to get inside and board it all up," Jack didn't wait for a response as he limped away.

Will got to his feet, his heart racing, his jaw clenched. He felt like he could take on the world, that he could kill any alpha that tried to touch him. Except one.

He squinted in the darkness until his eyes landed on where Hannibal had fallen, utterly still and deathly silent.

Chapter 7

Chapter Summary

A new normal begins.

Five Months Later

The quiet of the woods was a welcome relief. If Jack didn't have the TV on it was the radio, and almost always the police scanner at the same time. It brought the noise of the cities out to the quiet of Wolf Trap as Jack monitored to ensure it never physically encroached on their space.

They hadn't had any trouble since that first night, though they had erected barricades around the porch and boarded up much of the house so they could retreat to it if necessary. But the dead alphas they had left out on the road seemed to have warded off any more intrusions. And then, as the weeks wore on, some semblance of order was restored. Temporarily at least.

At first, Jack had come with them to protect them. Though Will knew in part there was a draw to bringing his own omegan wife, Bella, to the safety of this solitude. But he had been right to fear for Will's safety.

Not just that first night, but everything they saw on the television, when any of the stations were working. The backlash of the state had been swift, trying to rein in the omega uprising. But just as soon as they thought they had quelled it, the coup had happened. It had been relatively bloodless in the end, and now, five months since this whole thing had started, life was beginning to settle and Will had achieved an almost mythic status.

Not him really, but what he represented. All the same it made him eager not to show his face anywhere. As much as he was sure things would now be better for omegas, he didn't want to be the poster child for the movement. The coup had never been his goal, he had just been trying to survive.

Will strolled down towards the lake, feeling each step taking him further into the quiet. If he had his waders he'd go out to the middle of the stream and find absolute peace and silence. But not today. Jack and Bella were leaving today, finally deciding it was okay to return to the city now that everything seemed to be safe again. Will was hopeful he could disappear into obscurity and in years to come when this whole episode was remembered, no one would be able to say for sure if that omega who had claimed the alpha in the Mating Run was actually fact or an urban legend.

Will drew in a breath and soaked up the calm before starting his way back to the house.

It was going to be strange to be all alone, after everything.

After Hannibal.

*

As he returned to the back of the house the few strays that he'd collected were eager to see him, as was the alpha who stood on the porch, his eyes glowing with a want that made Will's cheeks heat.

They hadn't been together since that first time in the arena.

Hannibal hadn't pressed for anything and Will didn't want anything, technically. He *did* want Hannibal, he wanted him desperately, but he needed to be sure that was the connection they'd begun to forge in the dome. That this was because of what he knew about Hannibal and how they could see that darker side in each other. He wanted to make sure it wasn't just omegan instincts driving him to his bonded mate.

And with Jack and Bella around in the cosy house, there had been no way to explore that in any extensive way. They had spent time together and Will had been teaching Hannibal how to fish, Hannibal had cooked a lot. They slept in separate rooms and saying good night and going their separate ways every evening had become increasingly difficult as their friendship had bloomed.

They had grown to know each other in ways Will had never thought he would with anyone, much less an alpha. They had become fond friends and witty sparring partners.

Will was sure now after five months of being around Hannibal, that the desire he felt was his own and not purely instinctive. All the more watching Hannibal around others - watching him fill out a meticulously curated person suit that charmed Jack and Bella beyond any suspicions they could ever have of him. It made Will proud in a way he was unable to express.

"Enjoy your walk?" Hannibal asked, as Will approached. It was his morning routine and Hannibal had never joined him for it, never even asked to, and Will appreciated that so much. Hannibal seemed to know that Will needed that space every morning. Coffee and then a walk in the quiet to let his mind settle for the day ahead.

"I did," Will replied, gruffer than he had meant to and so he added a smile. Interacting with others so closely on a day to day basis had not improved his lack of personability. But Hannibal's returned smile was fond.

They both paused then, obviously so. And Will knew it was for the same reason - they had stopped themselves leaning in for a soft kiss, maybe a peck on the cheek. Or even a slight caress. Just something, one of those small renewals of connections that mated pairs always felt compelled to share.

There had been none of that, and holding back from it was getting harder by the day.

“Jack and Bella are almost packed,” Hannibal broke the silence and nodded towards the unmarked SUV that sat beside Will’s beat up old truck. An agent sat in the front, having orders to come and retrieve the Crawfords now that life was returning to a new normality.

The back of the vehicle was open with a couple of cases inside. They hadn’t brought much, it had been a quick race through the city to collect Bella and the cases she had hastily packed, before they had come here. All of which they’d had to retrieve from their wrecked SUV in the days after they had arrived at Will’s house.

They both emerged on the porch then, Bella holding open the door as Jack came through with two coffees in thermoses Will had given them, a bag of snacks under his arm.

“There you are,” Bella brightened when she saw him and Will couldn’t deny how much he liked her. How nice it had been to spend time around a fellow omega. Something he’d never had before and now knew he would miss. All the same, he found himself eager for them to leave so that he could finally be alone with Hannibal.

“Sorry, I shouldn’t have taken so long,” Will replied.

Bella shook her head and moved to embrace him, “hush, you don’t need to change anything or apologise for anything, Will. We wouldn’t have left without saying goodbye.”

Whilst they embraced, Jack put the items in the SUV and closed it all up, ready for them to leave.

“This is goodbye for now then,” Jack said, holding out his hand when Bella let him go. Will shook it firmly.

“For now?”

“Well, given the new bill of omegan rights, there’s nothing stopping me giving you your job back.” Jack replied with a smile, before holding up his hands in placation, “if you want, whenever you’re ready.”

“Thank you, Jack.” Will said, giving him an appreciative smile.

Jack gave a curt nod and released Will’s hand, turning then to shake Hannibal’s as well.

With the last of the pleasantries done, and the SUV fully loaded, the agent at the wheel pulled away, taking the Crawfords back to Baltimore and leaving Will and Hannibal in silence.

Will drew in a deep breath, tasting the crisp air at the back of his throat - and something else. The scent that he knew so well now but hadn’t had a chance to explore any further.

“Normality has returned,” Will said, very much feeling the absence of the other couple. “And now I can go back to normal, such as that was. Quantico, BAU. A mundane existence that I will never take for granted.” It was wishful thinking. Despite Jack’s offer, Will was unsure how practical it would be for him to take it up. He could imagine driving to Quantico on his first day back and immediately being hounded by all and sundry. From activists to the press and everybody in between.

In the silence he heard Hannibal move, then felt his closeness, and his hesitation. Will relaxed, purposely, invitingly. And then Hannibal stepped behind him and circled his arms around Will's waist so that he pulled him back against his chest.

Will let out a low groan at the contact.

"Our desire to be together sparked a revolution, very little mundane about that." Hannibal muttered next to Will's ear.

The gesture felt familiar despite them having never touched each other this way before. Perhaps they had, daily, in their minds.

Will turned in Hannibal's arms, his hands immediately snaking around the back of his neck and pulling him down into a hungry kiss. No hesitancy, no questions. Whatever they had felt in the arena was still alive and well within them both.

"Need you," Will broke the kiss to growl the words against Hannibal's mouth.

"Yes," Hannibal breathlessly replied.

"Need everything," Will moved his mouth to Hannibal's neck, ghosting over the mating mark. "Need to see you. You, the man, the doctor, the Ripper. Need everything."

"I promised I would share everything with my mate," Hannibal replied, nuzzling against the bite mark on Will's neck.

*

Hannibal wanted to be gentle. He wanted to treat Will with the reverence he always intended to. But he was finding it hard to restrain himself. Not least because, unlike their previous encounter, Will had no hesitancy whatsoever.

And why should he? They were mates now.

"Fuck me," Will growled the words, a command rather than a plea, as they made it through the door.

Hannibal shook his head, "Bedroom," he countered. "I don't want to take you on the floor like an animal, not again."

He felt Will shudder at the words.

"I don't care," he replied, pulling at Hannibal's shirt until he heard it rip.

With a growl, Hannibal slammed Will against the wall, and Will simply laughed.

"You'll give me everything, you'll let me see you," Will taunted. "All this information and I could turn you in. I could be the agent that finally caught the Ripper. A perfect honey trap."

Hannibal supposed he could. But he didn't believe for one moment it would happen. He softened, loosening his grasp on Will and pressing his mouth to Will's neck once more.

"You could. It would make your career, maybe even overshadow some of what has happened, so that you are remembered as more than the omega that caused an uprising." Hannibal taunted back, knowing Will really didn't want to forever be known just for what happened in that damn dome. "But you won't."

"No? You seem so sure," Will panted the words as he leaned his head back, letting Hannibal nip and lick at his neck.

"I am. I'm completely certain, because I've seen enough of the darkness in you to know that you crave the darkness in me. You have a knack for monsters."

Will moaned again, pushing his hips forward to rut against Hannibal.

"Yes," Will gasped.

Hannibal pushed Will back and looked at him, studying the beautiful omega for a moment before picking him up bridal style and heading towards the stairs.

"I'll just have to trust that you won't turn me in, and you'll have to trust that I won't kill you." Hannibal rumbled the words as he carried Will up the stairs.

They were kissing again by the time they reached the top and he had to set Will down so that they didn't fall. He followed when Will took him by the hand and led him to his room.

*

"Alpha," Will repeated the word over and over, breathless as Hannibal thrust into him.

It was a gentle motion, with the alpha between his spread legs, taking him on his back as he always preferred.

Hannibal's arms cradled his head, their lips pressed together, as their bodies rocked. Will moaned over and over into Hannibal's mouth, already overcome by the dual stimulation against his cock and is O-gland. He'd never felt pleasure like this before. He'd never been so wet or hard before.

Was it that Hannibal was so skilled? Or was it because of the connection they had now, deep and instinctive - bonded forever.

"Deeper," Will moaned, his arms around Hannibal's neck and constricting tighter, trying to pull Hannibal further inside him. He wanted to feel all of him, he needed his knot.

Hannibal grunted in response, driving himself deeper, pushing himself with his powerful legs so that the motion became only longer, but not harder. Not for one moment breaking the rhythm that was causing Will so much pleasure that he began to feel tears sting at the corners of his eyes.

“Alpha,” he moaned again, his legs hiking up around Hannibal, moving as one. “Knot me!”

Hannibal grunted again, his arms pulling Will tight to him, his lips now mouthing over Will’s mating bite. It felt like this was their first time, whilst also feeling like they had done it a million times before. Their bodies knew each other on a level Will had never known was possible.

Will could feel Hannibal’s swollen knot pressing against him, growing ever bigger as he moved. The sensation made him shiver.

It was only then that the thrusts became harder.

With another grunt, Hannibal began to move quicker, harder, deeper. Each motion sparking pleasure through Will like he had never known before.

“Mine,” Hannibal gritted the word between clenched teeth as he buried his face in the crook of Will’s neck.

Will could feel Hannibal shuddering, his whole body vibrating at the same frequency as Will’s, as the omega’s climax began to swell.

“Yes, yes… yours…” Will muttered, the words knocked out of him with each harder thrust until he was spilling between them, his omegan cock twitching and throbbing against Hannibal’s furred belly, followed only moments later by an internal orgasm as Hannibal pushed his knot inside, pressing hard against Will’s o-gland.

It was the second orgasm that made Will cry out in pleasure. And for a moment he was overwhelmed by it all. What they had been through, how they had met, how he was always meant to be with this alpha, unquestionably.

As Will came, clenching around the ever swelling knot, he considered that perhaps he wouldn’t mind presenting for Hannibal some time. The only alpha he would ever do so for. The only alpha he’d ever have in his life.

The other half of his being. The alpha to which he’d be forever conjoined.

Will realised he was holding his breath, riding through the high, unable to escape the overwhelming thoughts.

Without being discovered and handed over to The Mating Run the coup would have never happened, and more importantly he would never have met his alpha. If he thought about it too long it became impossible to comprehend. Impossible to breathe.

Hannibal took his face in his hands, his pupils dilated and his knot throbbing inside Will as he muttered tenderly, “It’s ok, Will. Inhale. Just breathe.”

Will did.

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